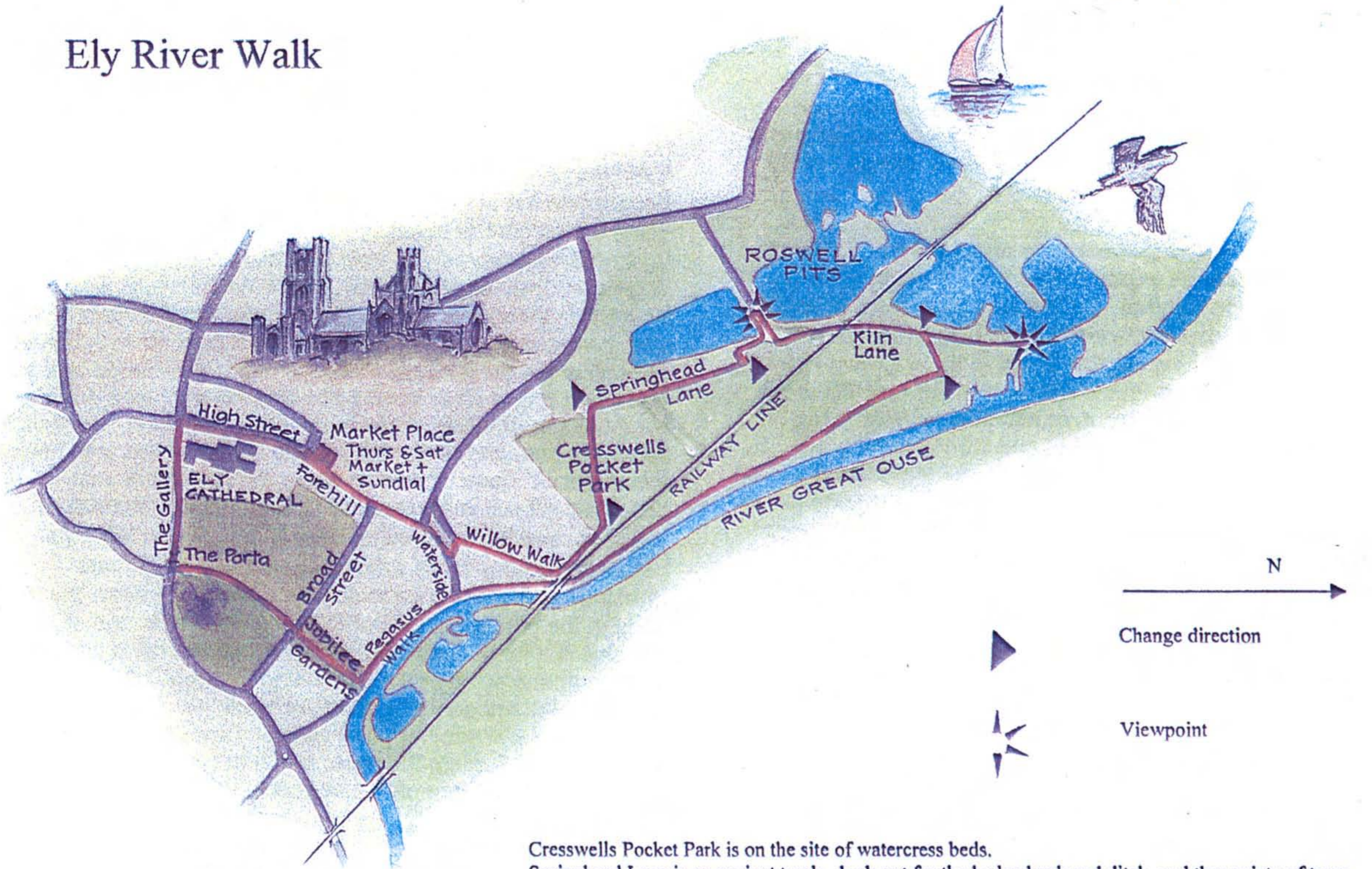


# Ely River Walk



Cresswells Pocket Park is on the site of watercress beds. Springhead Lane is an ancient track - look out for the hedge bank and ditch, and the variety of trees. Don't miss the stunning views of the Cathedral from the viewpoint between the pits. Great crested grebe, tufted duck and moorhen can usually be seen on the Pits and herons along by the river. Kingfishers and barn owls also frequent the area.



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## Ely Riverside and Roswell Pits

This circular walk from the centre of Ely takes about an hour and a half and includes spectacular views of the cathedral and a Wildlife Trust nature reserve. Some of the paths can be muddy and uneven so stout footwear is advisable.

From the west door of the Cathedral go along the north side of Cathedral Green, through a gate and turn left through an arch and then right into High Street. On a sunny day pause to test the sundial in the Market Square then continue down Forehill and into Waterside passing the Old Black Bull. At Crown Point, formerly the Three Crowns Public House turn left and follow the road round to the right then turn right into Willow Walk. Just before you reach the river turn left across the Fishermen's Carpark to Cresswells Pocket Park on the site of medieval watercress beds and a 1960s rubbish tip. Follow the track to the left across the Pocket Park and go down the steps or ramp and turn right into Springhead Lane. The ditches and banks at either side of the track is evidence that this is an ancient route into Ely. The variety of trees provides food and nest sites for a variety of birds including blackbirds, blue tits, chaffinch, long tailed tits and the occasional green woodpecker and sparrowhawk.

A gap in the hedge on the left leads to the newest of the three pits which make up Roswell Pits Site of Special Scientific Interest. The SSSI is because of fossil ichthyosaurs, plesiosaurs and crocodilians found when the pits were being dug to provide clay to reinforce riverbanks. Look out for tufted duck, great crested grebe and mallards on the pit.

Turn right and follow the path along the pit bank and through a gate onto a tarmac road. The route turns right along the tarmac road but a short detour to the left will be rewarded with what must be one of the best views of Ely Cathedral. Follow the tarmac road downhill past a mature oak tree on the left to the level crossing.

Having safely negotiated the crossing, pause by the gate on the right hand side of the path to look for wading birds, ducks and thrushes on the washland. Turn left along a footpath before you reach the carpark or extend your walk in front of the building to Cuckoo Bridge where you may be lucky enough to see a kingfisher, great crested grebe, marsh harrier, cuckoo, or even a bittern flying low over the reedbed. Return to the carpark and take the footpath towards the river. Turn right through the gate and follow the bank parallel with the river. The hedge is a good place for tits and other small birds and the washland provides good hunting grounds in the evening for barn owls. Continue through a gate and under the railway bridge where you may see the swallows' nests. Carry on along the river bank past pollarded willows in Pegasus Walk and moored boats then pause to read the information boards outside the Maltings before continuing to the water feature made of Barnack limestone at the entrance to Jubilee Gardens. Follow the path through the gardens into Broad Street. At the far end of Jubilee gardens is a large slate slab, which commemorates the opening of the gardens by HRH the Duke of Edinburgh. Cross over Broad Street and go through an iron gate into Cherry Hill Park. From the Park is another good view of the cathedral. At the top of the park go through the Porta and turn right along the gallery back to the West Door of the cathedral.

For further information about the Wildlife Trust, go to the website [www.wildlifebcnp.org](http://www.wildlifebcnp.org) or phone 01954 713500

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